

SACRAMENTO ETHNIC COMMUNITIES SURVEY
PORTUGUESE

Date: November 27, 1983
Place: 818 - 38th Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

Subject: GARDENIA BENROS

Interviewer: Joe D'Alessandro

- :00 Introduction
- :45 Born on Sao Tiago, Cape Verde Islands. Now 21 years old.
- 1:15 Discusses the changes that took place in Cape Verde after the Portuguese revolution; prejudice, which didn't surface before the revolution, came out. Blacks (which are in the majority) vs. Whites. Many in better positions were forced to leave. Maids didn't want to be maids anymore.
- 2:30 Her family was forced to leave. They left the house and furniture exactly how it was. The changes began the day after the revolution. Fights took place. Some wanted independance, others didn't.
- 3:50 After the revolution the workers took the farm, they fought for rights.
- 4:30 She thought that the islands shouldn't be independant. The islands are poor because of a lack of rain. Being dependant of Portugal provided economic help.
- 5:25 She wants to return to the islands to visit.
- 6:00 Ties between the islands and Lisbon are better now than immediately after the revolution. The islands are made up of many races, mostly black.
- 7:10 After the revolution her family was forced to leave and first went to Lisbon then came to Rhode Island because of an uncle that was there. Her father was an important, educated man in Cape Verde but when he came here he had to work in a factory. Her mother never worked outside the home in the islands but in the U.S. she also worked in a factory.
- 10:00 The established Cape Verdean immigrants here helped them find a home and jobs in the beginning.
- 10:50 Said that there is little friction now between the various ethnic groups. She considers herself Cape Verdean, not just Portuguese, because the Cape Verdean culture is different. She has part of Portugal in her but she is Cape Verdean.
- 13:00 The Cape Verdean culture is a great mixture of cultures; Portuguese, African, others. There is great African influence. The islands vary Brava, for instance, has a stronger Portuguese influence. There is also Brazilian and Jewish influences.
- 14:30 In the islands they spoke criolo at home and in the streets but Portuguese in the schools. The teachers would get mad if they didn't speak Portuguese.
- 16:00 The teachers in the school were Cape Verdean but educated in Portugal.
- 16:45 Most Cape Verdeans, especially in the countryside, are Catholic. There are other religions in the city but are minor. Priests come in from countries like Italy. There has been strife between Catholics and Protestants.

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19:20 She is a singer. She sang all her life and now sings in a band in New England. She recently went to Portugal to perform where she was a big success. The band is made up of all Cape Verdeans. They play a variety of music including Cape Verdean, Portuguese, Brazilian, Jazz,etc

21:40 Her mother was also a singer. She sang in the islands and met her father singing.

23:50 She won the title of Miss Cape Verdean U.S.A. she won over 24 other contestants. She also won the title of Miss Pawtucket and Miss Bay State.

24:10 Rhode Island has the largest Cape Verdean community. The Fall River/New Bedford area of Mass. has the largest Portuguese?azorean community.

25:00 Cape Verdeans left the islands because of a lack of rain. Her grandma says that there is no one (original) left in the islands, they are all here. Today only some younger ones and people who emigrated from Africa are there.